



Testimony, House Judiciary Committee
April 30, 2015

Representative Klint Kesto and committee:

The Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan expresses its support of House Bill 4210, which amend the Michigan Medical Marihuana Act to allow edible and topical forms of medical marijuana for adults and children, in particular CBD oil.

Approximately one-third of people with epilepsy are not able to achieve seizure control despite the best medical, dietary, and surgical therapies. The need for better treatments for children and adults with epilepsy is enormous. Those who live with uncontrolled seizures live in continual risk of serious injuries and loss of life.

Cannabidiol (CBD) is a non-psychoactive component of the cannabis plant; delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) is the psychoactive component. Non-euphoric, CBD rich oil is derived from a cannabis plant that is CBD rich and low in THC, therefore resulting in no "high" to the user. The use of CBD is showing promising results as a therapeutic treatment for patients with intractable epilepsy.

There is much research to support that CBD has significant therapeutic benefits, while causing few known side effects - particularly compared to the side effects of traditional anti-seizure medications. While doctors agree that further research is needed, recent clinical trials are demonstrating its usefulness. Many researchers also agree that marijuana products should be offered to patients who have failed or are adversely affected by existing therapies

The Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan believes that nothing should stand in the way of patients gaining access to potentially life-saving treatment. If a patient and their healthcare professionals feel that the potential benefits of medical marijuana for uncontrolled epilepsy outweigh the risks, then families need to have that legal option now -- not in five years or ten years. For people living with severe uncontrolled epilepsy, time is not on their side. This is a very important, difficult, and personal decision that should be made by a patient and family working with their healthcare team.

While medical marijuana is legal in the state of Michigan, there is still a gap in the availability of edible and non-smokeable forms. This is especially important for children with Dravet Syndrome and other severe epilepsy syndromes who have found some relief through the use of CBD oil. This has been well publicized by Paige Figi, whose daughter Charlotte had tried many therapies until she was helped by the so called Charlotte's Web strain of marijuana which has been bred to be high in CBD oil.

We urge you to pass this important legislation.

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